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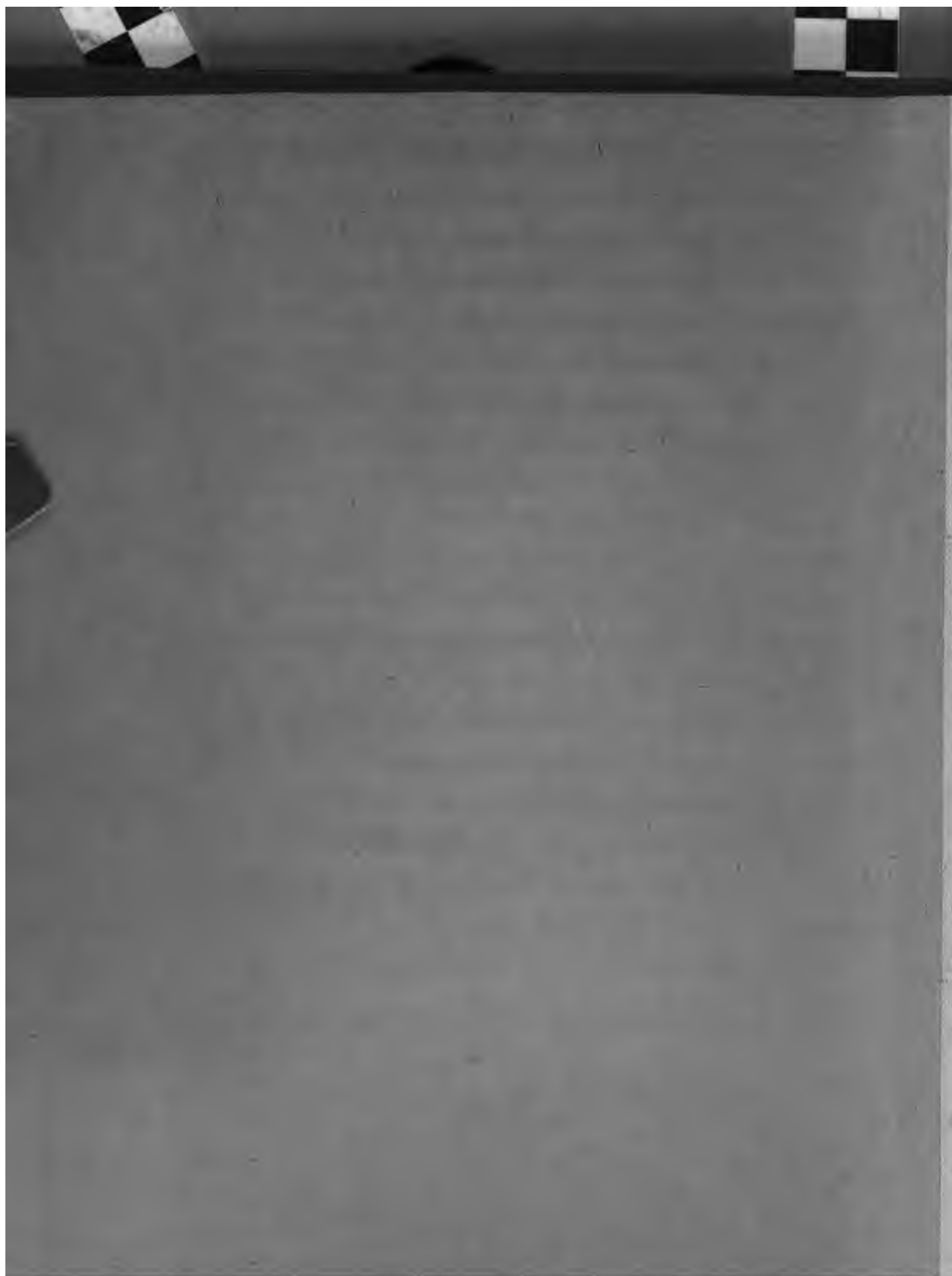
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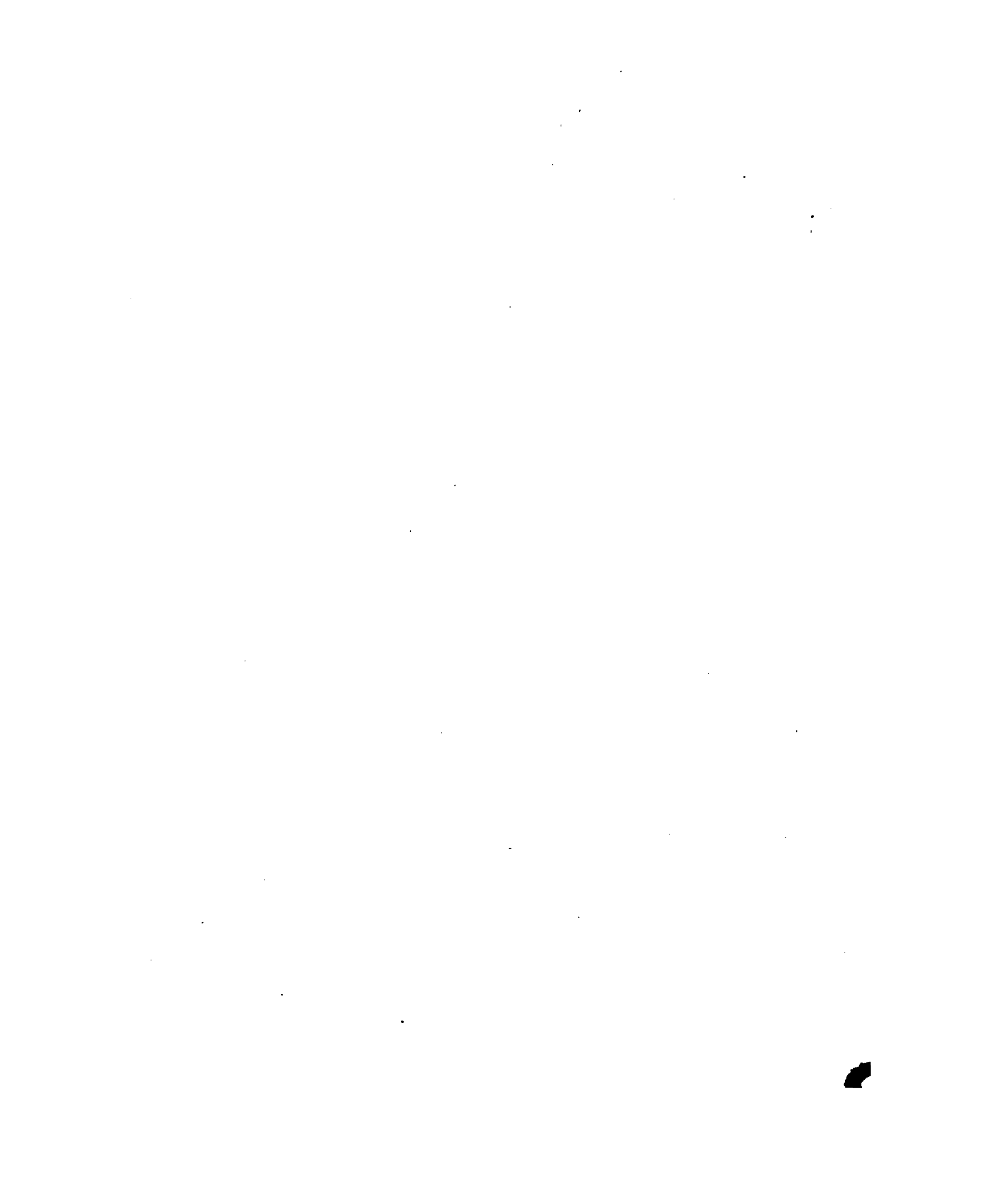


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Mundy  
N.B.







Munc





*From the author*  
*Francis Noel Clarke*  
*Mr. Mundy of Morheaton, to Mr. Gibbon*

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# NEEDWOOD

# FOREST.

by  
Francis Noel Clarke Mundy.

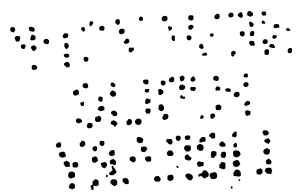
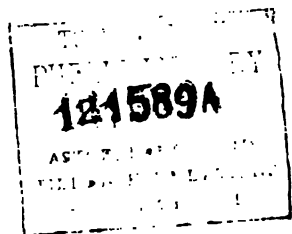
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LICHFIELD:

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# NEEDWOOD FOREST.

## P A R T, I.

*N*EE*DWOOD!* if e'er my early voice  
Hath taught thy echoes to rejoice ;  
If e'er my hounds in opening cry  
Have fill'd thy banks with ecstasy ;  
If e'er array'd in cheerful green  
Our train hath deck'd thy wintry scene ;  
Ere yet thy wood-wild walks I leave,  
My tributary verse receive :

A 2

With

With thy own wreath my brows adorn,  
 And to thy praises tune my horn!

What green-rob'd Nymph, all loose her hair,  
 With buskin'd leg, and bosom bare,  
 Steps lightly down the turfy glades,  
 And beckons tow'rd yon opening shades? —  
 No harlot-form, dissembling guile  
 With wanton air and painted smile,  
 Lures to enchanted halls or bowers,  
 Where festive Vice consumes his hours.  
 Her mild and modest looks dispense  
 The simple charm of innocence:  
 And a sweet wildness in her eye  
 Sparkles with young sincerity. —  
 Lead on, fair guide, ere wakes the dawn,  
 With thee I'll climb the steepy lawn,  
 With thee the leafy labyrinth trace,  
 Where dwells the Genius of the place. —  
 His large limbs press a prim-rose bed,  
 A moss-grown root sustains his head,

And,

And, lift'ning to a Druid's rhimes,  
He bends his eye on distant times :  
While troops of fylvan Vassals meet  
To cast their garlands at his feet,  
And pipe and frisk in rings about,  
Or parly with the Hunter's shout.  
And now a fragrant show'r he throws  
Of blossoms from his curled brows,  
And rising waves his oaken wand,  
And bids yon magic scenes expand !—

First blush the hills with orient light,  
And pierce the fable veil of night,  
Green bends the waving shade above,  
And glist'ring dew-drops gem the grove :  
Next shine the shelving lawns around,  
Bright threads of silver net the ground ;  
And down, the entangled brakes among,  
The white rill sparkling winds along :  
Then, as the pausing zephyrs breathe,  
The billowy mist recedes beneath ;

B

Slow,

Slow, as it rolls away, unfold  
 The vale's fresh glories green and gold ;  
 DOVE laughs, and shakes his tresses bright,  
 And trails afar a line of light.

Now glows the illumin'd landscape round !  
 Ye Vulgar hence !— 'tis sacred ground !  
 Hence to the flimsy walks of art,  
 That lull, but not transport the heart.  
 Nature, O Muse, here fits alone,  
 And marks these regions for thy own ;  
 Here her variety of joys  
 Nor season bounds, nor change destroys :  
 Be mine the pride, tho' weak my strains,  
 That first I woo'd thee to these plains ;  
 Where Spring, in all her beauty drest,  
 But promises a brighter guest :  
 Where Summer yields her greens and flowers  
 To Autumn's variegated bowers :  
 Smiles Winter, as their honours fall,  
 And bids his hollies shame them all.

Ye

DOVE, etc. ] The river Dove.

And bids his hollies, etc. ] The numerous groves and clumps of hollies give uncommon beauty to the winter-scenes of *Needwood Forest*.

Ye sage Professors of design,  
 Whom system's stubborn rules confine,  
 Can science here one blemish show?  
 Or one deficient grace bestow?  
 EMES, who yon desert wild explor'd,  
 And to it's name the scene restor'd;  
 Whose art is nature's law maintain'd,  
 Whose order negligence restrain'd,  
 Here, fir'd by native beauty, trac'd  
 The foot-steps of the Goddess, Taste:  
 Won from her coy retreats she came,  
 And led him up these paths to fame.

Here ev'ry flower improves the gale  
 From the meek violet of the vale  
 To her, who flaunts in air sublime,  
 The woodbine, queen of summer's prime:  
 While each delicious shade may vie  
 With those of boasted Arcady.  
 There sweet varieties appear  
 Of thickets, shap'd by nibbling Deer,

Of

EMES, *etc.* ] Mr. EMES, who ornamented *Beaufort*, the seat of Ld. PAGET, which is seen from the Forest, and who has obtained great reputation for his Taste in ornamental Gardening, has frequently assured the Author, that he took his best hints from the scenes of *Needwood*.



Of hills, that swell with gradual ease,  
 Wood-skirted lawns, and scatter'd trees;  
 Of vallies seen down distant glades,  
 That break the mafs of mingling shades;  
 While nature's attribute, extent,  
 Crowns each inferior ornament! —

On this green unambitious brow,  
 Fair Mistrefs of the vale below,  
 With floping hills enclos'd around,  
 Their heads with oaks and hollies crown'd,  
 With lucky choice, by happy hands,  
 Plac'd in good hour, my dwelling ftands;  
 And draws the distant trav'ler's eye,  
 Enamour'd of it's fcenery;  
 Where all things give, what all exprefs,  
 Content and rural happinefs.  
 Where far retir'd from life's dull form  
 Comes no intruder but the ftorm;  
 The ftorm, that with contrasted low'r  
 Endears the fair the filent hour.

Thus

Thus their wise days our fathers led,  
Fleet ran their hounds, their arrows sped,  
And jocund Health with rosy smile  
Look'd on, companion of their toil:  
Till tyrant Law usurp'd the land,  
Stretch'd o'er the woods his iron hand,  
Forbad the echoing horn to blow,  
Maim'd the staunch hound, and snapp'd the bow.

Here with fair peace and modest fame  
They dwelt, who boasted Bagot's name,—  
Go, BAGOT, plead your country's cause,  
While senates listen with applause,  
{ With fearless truth and manly sense  
Detecting specious eloquence:  
Great talents to the world are due,  
Retirement were a crime in you.  
Go, and receive your oaken crown!  
Here, with no title to renown,

C

Leave

*Maim'd the staunch hound, etc.* ] Alludes to the Order for *Lawing*, or cutting off a claw of all Dogs kept within the purlieus of the royal forests, to prevent their destroying the Deer.

*Here with fair peace, etc.* ] The Author rents his house, upon the verge of the forest, of Sir WM. BAGOT. It was built and inhabited by two gentlemen of the BAGOT family.

Leave me to loiter at my door  
 Beneath the spreading fycamore,  
 That canopies the sloping lawn ;  
 And view the deer at early dawn  
 In troops come winding down the hill  
 To taste fresh herbage near the rill ;  
 Or count at noon their slumb'ring heaps ;  
 At evening watch their playful leaps ;  
 Or hear the quiring of the grove  
 Give breath to harmony and love ;  
 Or listen to the hum profound,  
 In the still air that floats around ;  
 Or mark yon hills extended side,  
 Where turf and shade the space divide ;—  
 Here the wood straggles tow'rd the plain,  
 The pasture there prevails again ;  
 The heifer grazes on it's brow,  
 Clamours the rook on trees below ;  
 Gay golden furze and purple ling  
 Around their mixt embroidery fling,  
 O'er all, irregularly join'd,  
 Th' according outline waves behind.

No dusky Cares o'er-hang the bower,  
No Passions wreck the halcyon hour;  
Nurs'd in the shade Reflection springs,  
Smooths her white plumes, and tries her wings.  
No leaf of autumn falls in vain;  
No flower-bell droops beneath the rain,  
No bubble down the current flows,  
But life's uncertain tenure shows.  
Those thorns protect the forest's hopes;  
That tree the slender ivy props:  
Thus rise the mighty on the mean!  
Thus on the strong the feeble lean!  
In yonder holly—blush mankind!—  
A rare fidelity. I find;  
Like yours tho' summer's flatteries end,  
My winter here hath found a friend.—  
Hail faithful fav'rite tree! to you  
The Muse shall pay observance due:  
Whether in horrent files you stand  
Round sapling oaks a guardian band;  
Or form aloft a shelt'ring bower  
Impervious to the sun or shower;  
Whether to yon hill-side you throng  
Ranging in various groups along;

Or on the plain, maturely grown,  
You boldly brave the storm alone,  
Or tapering high, with woodbines hid,  
Rise in a fragrant pyramid;  
Your vigorous youth with upright shoots,  
Your verdant age, your glowing fruits,  
Your glossy leaves, and columns gray  
Shall live the favorites of my lay!

Alas! in vain with warmth and food  
You cheer the songsters of the wood,  
The barbarous boy from you prepares  
On treacherous twigs his viscous snares.  
Yes, the poor bird, you nurs'd, shall find  
Destruction in your rifled rind.  
Thus good and ill too often meet,  
And bitter mingles with the sweet!  
—Ye pedagogues! let truant youth  
Imbibe from you this gen'rous truth;  
That one humane, one tender thought  
Is worth the whole, that schools have taught.

WITH

## P A R T, II.

**W** I T H what fond gaze my eye pursues,  
*N E E D W O O D*, thy sweetly-varying views !  
 Satyr, or Nymph, or sylvan God  
 A fairer circuit never trod !  
 Charm'd, as I turn, thy pictures seem  
 The golden fabricks of a dream:  
 Where Fiction stands with prism bright,  
 Rays forth her many-colour'd light,  
 Dyes the green herb, and purple flower,  
 Gives glittering lustres to the flower ;  
 Then gilds with livelier tints the sky,  
 Or bends her radiant bow on high.

To scenes so elegantly wild  
 Fancy, of old, her darling child  
 From *AVON*'s flowery margin brought,  
 And *ARDEN* boasts what *N E E D W O O D* taught.

D

Such

*And ARDEN boasts, etc. ] See SHAKESPEAR'S As you like it.—Scene Forest of Arden.*

Such shades by mazy paths perplex'd,  
 Where strays the traveller inly vex'd,  
 Inspir'd the Muse of SPENCER's pen ;  
 The *wandering wood*, and *Errors den*,  
 Dwarfs, Palfreys, Dames, and Giants rise  
 Full on Imaginations eyes !  
 See, See the Sarazin advance !  
 The red-cross Knight hath couch'd his lance !  
 They meet, the Christian wins the field,  
 And bears away the *faithless* shield !

With such companions fond to rove,  
 I venerate each hill and grove,  
 To Phœbus as to Dian dear,  
 And find a new Parnassus here .  
 Here might the sacred sisters dwell  
 By pebbly brook, or gushing well :  
 O let me listen, as they sing,  
 In some close vale beside a spring,  
 Whose stream the intruding alder chides,  
 Where the wild - bee her treasure hides !—

Or

*The wandering Wood, etc.* ] Fairy Queen, Book 1st. chap. 1st. stanza 13th.

*This is the wandering Wood, this Errors den.*

*And bears away, etc.* ] B. 1st. c. 2d. The Shield inscribed *Sans Foy*.

Or fit in high imbowering shade  
With Contemplation, heav'n-ey'd maid,  
Where the scant sun through branches thin  
Chequers the dark green floor within;  
Where ev'ry leaf is wisdom's page,  
And each gray trunk a hoary sage.  
Nor motion, human form, or noise  
This solemn pause of life destroys;  
Save where the playful squirrel bounds,  
Or ring-dove pours her plaintive sounds,  
Or lurking peasant lops an oak  
Restraining half his pilfering stroke,  
Or with his faggot stoops to rest  
Both by his years and burthen prest.

Here, seen of old, the elfin race  
With sprightly vigils mark'd the place;  
Their gay processions charm'd the sight,  
Gilding the lucid noon of night;  
Or, when obscure the midnight hour,  
With glow-worm lanterns hung the bower.

—Hark!



—Hark!— the soft lute! along the green  
Moves with majestic step the queen!  
Attendant Fays around her throng,  
And trace the dance or raise the song;  
Or touch the shrill reed, as they trip,  
With finger light and ruby lip.

High, on her brow sublime, is born  
One scarlet wood-bine's tremulous horn;  
A gaudy bee-bird's triple plume  
Sheds on her neck its waving gloom;  
With silvery goffamer entwin'd  
Stream the luxuriant locks behind.  
Thin folds of tangled network break  
In airy waves adown her neck:  
Warp'd in his loom, the spider spread  
The far-diverging rays of thread,  
Then round and round with shuttle fine  
Inwrought the undulating line.  
One rose-leaf forms her crimson vest,  
The loose edge crosses o'er her breast.

And

*A gaudy bee-bird's, etc. ] The Humming Bird.*

And one translucent fold, which fell  
From the tall lily's ample bell,  
Forms with sweet grace her snowy train,  
Flows, as she steps, and sweeps the plain.  
Silence and Night enchanted gaze,  
And Hesper hides his vanquish'd rays!—

Now the wak'd reed-birds swell their throats,  
And night-larks trill their mingled notes:  
Yet hush'd in moss with writhed neck  
The black-bird hides his golden beak;  
Charm'd from his dream of love, he wakes,  
Opes his gay eye, his plumage shakes,  
And stretching wide each ebon wing,  
First in low whispers tries to sing;  
Then sounds his clarion loud, and thrills  
The moon-bright lawns, and shadowy hills.  
Silent the choral Fays attend,  
And then their silver voices blend,  
Each shining thread of sound prolong,  
And weave the magic woof of song.

E

Pleas'd

Pleas'd Philomela takes her stand  
On high, and leads the fairy band,  
Pours sweet at intervals her strain,  
And guides with beating wing the train.  
Whilst interrupted zephyrs bear  
Hoarse murmurs from the distant wear;  
And at each pause is heard the swell  
Of Echo's soft symphonious shell.

Nor the dread night my mind alarms,—  
NIGHT, and her horrors have their charms.  
O'er the wide forest oft I roam,  
What time the trav'ler, far from home,  
Bewilder'd in the pathless brakes,  
There his cold bed despairing makes;  
And hear the fox with savage bark  
Pay distant courtship through the dark;  
The owl with fault'ring voice unfold  
Her tale, like one who shakes with cold:  
And then the alarmed woods resound  
Th' upbraidings of the well-train'd hound,

Who

Who with tremendous tongue arraigns  
And haunts the plunderer of his plains.  
So cries from earth the life-blood spilt,  
So waking furies harrass guilt!

Oft have I through this solemn glade  
Of old dismember'd hollies stray'd,  
Whose bold bare rugged brows are seen  
Thrust through the mantling ever-green;  
Tall clustring columns here ascend,  
And there in gothic arches bend;  
Whilst, as the silver moon-beams rise,  
Imagin'd temples strike my eyes,  
With tottering spire, and mouldering wall,  
And high roof nodding to its fall.—  
His lantern gleaming down the glade,  
One, like a sexton with his spade,  
Comes from their caverns to exclude  
The mid-night prowlers of the wood.—  
Through fields of air while pausing flow,  
Yon death-bell tells the village woe!

*And there in gothic arches, etc.* ] Dr. Warburton observes the gothic architecture originally imitated the groves, which were in earlier times consecrated to religious worship.

DIVINE LEGATION.

*One like a sexton, etc.* ] Earth-stopper.

Born on her clouds when Darknefs flings  
O'er the still air her raven wings,  
Ere yet the watery freight descends,  
While Heaven it's purposes fufpends,  
NIGHT, let me ftand in filent trance,  
And watch the lightning's kindling glance:  
While, ftiff'ning at the imagin'd ftroke,  
Appears behind a brighten'd oak,  
From juftice fled to this wild place,  
A confcious robber's gaftly face!—  
Or fancy views with fear-fix'd eye  
A mangled fpectre gliding by,  
Quick with the fafh who feems to wave  
His pale hand, beck'ning to a grave!—  
And, as the fleeting vifion dies,  
Loud thunders fhake the clofing fkies.

NIGHT, when rude blafts thy fcenes deform,  
O place me in the perilous ftorm!  
While the moon labouring thro' the clouds  
By turns her light reveals and fhrouds;  
Torn from it's trunk, when whirlwinds bear  
The twifted afh aloft in air:

And

And some vast elms' uprooted spoil  
Ploughs in its headlong fall the foil.  
While, as he stalks thro' groaning oaks,  
At intervals the old deer croaks:  
And the lean sow with paps drawn dry  
O'er rustling leaves trots whining by.—

Then pofts across the blasted plain,  
Born on the wild storm, Witchcraft's train,  
Aghast with guilt, and shrunk with age,  
And yelling with demoniack rage!—  
With eyes turn'd back malign and wide  
See blood-stain'd Murder silent stride,  
A moon-beam's sudden light expands,  
He starts, and hides his crimson hands!—  
And now the cauldron gleams afar,  
Fir'd by a baneful meteor's glare,  
Around they dance, they pause, and pour  
The mischiefs of the midnight hour;  
While trembling fiends with wonder gaze,  
Stretch their black wings, and fan the blaze!

F

ERE

## P A R T, III.

**E** R E Night withdraws her starry train,  
 I print long traces o'er the plain,  
 And bend my eyes to yon bright east  
 To meet the Morning's radiant guest,  
 As o'er the hill his golden rays  
 Burst thro' the thicket in a blaze.  
 Now from my foot the startled fawn  
 Bounds to its parent on the lawn ;  
 And the wak'd lark exulting springs,  
 Hangs high in air on quivering wings,  
 Chaunts his loud transports o'er the heath,  
 And eyes his lift'ning loves beneath.

Oft shall my TALBOT hither stray,  
 And friendship give new joys to day ;  
 On him his blooming bride attend,  
 Hither her graceful footsteps bend,  
 Fresh life her brighter beauties fling  
 O'er the young dawn, and blossom'd spring.

**They**

They come! their eddyng wheels resound,  
 The harness'd courfers proudly bound,  
 The light-hung chariot floats in air,  
 And laughing Hymen wreaths the pair!  
 As o'er the daify'd lawns they move  
 By glittering rill or dusky grove,  
 Old NEEDWOOD calls his softest gale,  
 Bids all his fragrant buds exhale:  
 His gazing herds around them throng,  
 His plighted birds suspend their song,  
 Each on her urn his Naiads lean,  
 And Wood-nymphs peep from allies green.

Where this gay mount o'er-looks the wood,  
 Charm'd with the scene a monarch stood,  
 Call'd these fair plains the richest gem,  
 That deck'd his triple diadem,  
 Awhile the cares of state forgot,  
 And with it's name adorn'd the spot.

Down

*Where this gay mount, etc.* ] A beautiful eminence called KING'S-STANDING.



Down yon meridian fields afar  
 When Mercia led her chiefs to war,  
 Fell in one hour three monarchs brave,  
 And LICHFIELD'S bower protects their grave.  
 Her stately spires amidst the skies  
 Ting'd by the orient sun arise,  
 With golden vanes invite the gale.—  
 Triumphant ladies of the vale!

Down yon mid-vale the british Nile,  
 Fair DOVE, comes winding many a mile;  
 And from his copious urn distils  
 The fatness of a thousand hills.  
 Swell, generous river, leave thy banks,  
 The thirsty soil shall give thee thanks!—  
 The generous river swells, and leads  
 His waters o'er impoverish'd meads,  
 And lays his ample treasure down,  
 Rich emblem of thy bounty, BROWN!

Pleas'd

*And LICHFIELD'S bower, etc.* ] LICHFIELD Bower is supposed to be the tumulus of three Saxon Kings slain in battle near that spot.

*British Nile, etc.* ] Dr. PLOTT calls the DOVE the Nile of England, and attributes the fertility of its floods to the sheep dung washed from the hills in the Moorlands.

*BROWN, etc.* ] HAWKINS BROWN Esq; of *Foston upon Dove*.

Pleas'd on yon high abode I gaze,  
Whence C'ANDISH foaming Dove surveys:  
And where those humbler vales extend  
Of thine, FITZHERBERT, chearful friend.  
Or mark upon yon round ascent  
The social flag and open tent,  
Where life's smooth paths with sweets are strown,  
And mirth makes every hour it's own.

Where spreads this grove it's umbrage wide  
Late the bold Outlaw fought and died.  
Oft. in it's dark recess the oak  
Had fall'n beneath his secret stroke,  
Full many a deer the night's dim ray  
Beheld his silent arrow slay,  
Deep furze conceal'd the fawns in vain,  
And lust of lucre thinn'd the plain.

G

Here

C'ANDISH, *etc.* ] *Doveridge*, the seat of C'ANDISH, Esq;

FITZHERBERT, *etc.* ] RICHARD FITZHERBERT, Esq; of *Sommershall*.

*The social flag, etc.* ] Messrs. ADDERLEY and SCOTT have pitched a tent upon a fine hill above *Coton*, from whence a flag flies when they are at home, as a signal to their friends.

*Outlaw, etc.* ] A Deer-stealer refusing to surrender was here slain by a Keeper.

Here, by no power before controll'd,  
He met a forester as bold ;  
O'er the fierce conflict frown'd the wood,  
And drank with thirsty roots his blood.

Yon bank demands a pitying look,  
Where life a gentler breast forfook ;  
Sole comfort of an aged pair !  
The true-love of a damsel fair !—  
At prime of dawn he stepp'd away ;  
Long was the journey, short the day ;  
The wint'ry blast blew loud and chill ;  
Night caught him on the unshelter'd hill ;  
Fatigu'd he fell ; no help came nigh ;  
His faithful dog alone was by ;  
Who, as he fondly lick'd his cheek,  
Heard his expiring master speak.  
“Heap not for me thy cottage-fire ;  
“Cold grows my heart, unhappy fire !

“ But

*Where life a gentler breast, etc.* ] This unfortunate young man being sent on an errand by the Author of this Poem, died on his return ; was found next morning in the forest within a mile of his home, his dog standing by him. He was a weaver, supported his father and mother ; was engaged on the night of his death to meet his sweetheart at a Christmas feast in the neighbourhood.

“But turn to my unfinish’d loom,  
“And weave the web, and bear it home!  
“Prepare not, dame, my evening meal;  
“But bid them ring my passing peal!  
“Deck not thyself, dear maid, to meet  
“Thy love; but bring his winding sheet!  
“I come not to your festive cheer;  
“Ye comrades, place me on my bier!—”  
—The morrow found him stiff and pale:  
Mournful the Muse recounts his tale.

Her stately tower there HANBURY rears,  
Which proudly looks o’er distant shires;  
Down the chill slope and darken’d glade  
Projects afar it’s length of shade;  
Affails the skies with giant force,  
And checks the whirlwind in it’s course;  
Or, when black clouds involve the pole,  
Disarms the thunders, as they roll!—  
Beneath how Nature throws around  
Grand inequalities of ground,  
While down the dells and o’er the steeps  
The wavy line of Paphos creeps!—

With

With awful sorrow I behold  
Yon cliff, that frowns with ruins old;  
Stout FERRERS there kept faithless ward,  
And GAUNT perform'd his Castle-guard.  
There captive MARY look'd in vain  
For NORFOLK, and her nuptial train;  
Enrich'd with royal tears the Dove,  
But sigh'd for freedom, not from love.  
'Twas once the feat of festive state,  
Where high born dames and nobles' fat;  
While minstrels, each in order heard,  
Their venerable songs prefer'd.  
False memory of it's state remains  
In the rude sport of brutal swains.

Now

*Yon cliff, etc.* ] TUTBURY CASTLE.

FERRERS, etc. ] ROBERT DE FERRERS joining a rebellion against HENRY 3d. forfeited the possession of *Tutbury*.

*Castle-guard, etc.* ] A service imposed upon those to whom Castles and Estates adjoining were granted.

MARY, etc. ] MARY Queen of Scots was a prisoner in *Tutbury* Castle at the time of the Duke of NORFOLK's intrigues: she listened to his proposals of marriage, as the only means of obtaining her liberty, declaring herself otherwise averse to farther matrimonial connections.

*While minstrels, etc.* ] The minstrels formerly crowded to *Tutbury* Castle, then a place of festivity and hospitality, in such numbers, as to require regulations of order and precedence amongst them, the person appointed for this purpose was called *King of the Minstrels*.

*In the rude sport, etc.* ] The annual Bull-running.

Now serpents hiss, and foxes dwell  
 Amidst the mould'ring citadel ;  
 And time but spares those broken towers  
 In mockery of human powers.

Yon hill, that glows with southern rays,  
 All-conscious of superior praise,  
 Swells her smooth top and pastures green,  
 And of her sisters seems the queen ;  
 Proud from her ancient seats to trace  
 The lineage of a generous race.  
 "That generous race," fair SUDBURY cries,  
 "Is mine," and bids her turrets rise,  
 Lifts from the lap of peace her dome,  
 Where finds Munificence a home ;  
 Then wide her shining lake she leads  
 Through blossom'd groves and emerald meads,  
 Cloaths with dark woods the distant scene,  
 And pours her dappled herds between.  
 —Ah me ! what sudden sadness lowers  
 O'er her fair front and vernal bowers !

H

There

*Yon hill, etc.* ] HOUND - HILL, the ancient seat of the VERNON'S.

There sinks to her untimely tomb  
A virgin flower in beauty's bloom!  
O thou waft all that youth admires,  
A parent loves, or friend desires!  
I knew thee well! my sorrowing heart  
Bears in thy loss a bitter part!—  
Whilst the sad Muse in plaintive verse  
Strews all her flowers around thy hearse,  
Let Pity quit thy grave, and go  
A mourner to yon house of woe.  
There from thy father's bosom break  
Sighs, which too eloquently speak:  
Thy mother weeps, but weeps resign'd,  
In all things noble, most in mind:  
Pale griefs thy sisters' cheeks invade;  
And one, alas, too tender maid!  
Holds a long melancholy strife  
Betwixt her sorrows and her life:  
Thy manly brothers strive to cure  
In vain, the pangs themselves endure.  
Fair Saint! a happier lot is thine  
Repos'd beneath the silent shrine!

Now

Now let me seek in pensive mood  
The rude recesses of the wood ;  
And, where congenial gloom extends,  
Think of lost hopes and distant friends ;  
Of scenes, whose pleasures fled too fast,  
And hours most valued now they're past !

Beside me lies a dingle deep,  
With shaggy banks abrupt and steep ;  
Through vistas wild my course I bend,  
Till day-light opens at the end :  
Where from intoxicating height  
Bursts the wide prospect on my sight.  
The terrace bold, on which I stand,  
Steps broad and forward on the land ;  
Rude hills compose the side-long scene,  
With crofts and cottages between :  
The various landscape onward spreads  
O'er cultur'd plains and verdant meads ;  
And feats, and towns, and hamlets rise,  
Where yon smoke curls into the skies,

And

*Beside me lies, etc.* ] The situation of NEEDWOOD is high, and its banks, descending from the plain of the forest to the country below, are in many places a mile deep ; they consist of alternate cliffs and dingles, and are entirely covered with trees and rough copses.



And spires, that pierce thro' tufted trees ;  
 Till, faintly fading by degrees,  
 Beyond, in wild confusion tost,  
 The hills blue tops in clouds are lost.

Yes, EATON-BANKS, in vain I strive  
 To hide the grief your oaks revive.—  
 Bow thy tall branches , grateful wood !  
 Afford me blossom, leaf, and bud !  
 He, for whose memory these I blend,  
 Thy late-lost master, was my friend !—  
 Fall, gentle dews ! fresh zephyrs, breathe !  
 Spread, cooling shades ! preserve my wreath !—  
 Alas, it withers ere its time !—  
 So faded he in manly prime !—  
 But Virtue, scorning friendships' aid,  
 Rears her own palms, which never fade !

HENRY,

*Yes* EATON-BANKS, *etc.* ] EATON-WOOD, seen from the Forest, was the property  
 of the late GODFREY BAGNELL CLARKE, ESQUIRE.

## P A R T, IV.

**H**ENRY, O leave, whilst youth is ours,  
 And health leads on the fleeting hours,  
 O leave awhile the court you grace,  
 And urge with me the sylvan chase!

Oft, as I bathe in morning's breath,  
 Ere wakes the plover on the heath,  
 Ere the sun robs the woodbine's smell,  
 Or dries the fox-glove's purple bell,  
 I hear the deep-mouth'd thunder rise;  
 The monarch of the woodland flies,  
 Whilst the loud triumphs of the horn  
 On breezy wings are backward born.  
 His subject mates no succour lend;  
 What tyrant ever found a friend?  
 He dies!—the fatiate echoes cease;  
 The forest reassumes its peace.

I

Now

*HENRY, etc.* ] The Hon. HENRY VERNON.  
*On breezy wings etc.* ] A Deer when hunted runs against the Wind.

Now fun - burnt Autumn with his spoils  
Diana's bleeding altar piles :

Again the slaughtering gun is heard,  
And wildly screams the parent bird ;  
All night she mourns her lessen'd brood,  
Still views them fluttering in their blood,  
With timorous call the rest collects,  
And with quick wing their flight directs.  
Now the strong buck his rival drives,  
And awes with jealous threats his wives :  
Slow move the kine to fresher fields ;  
The hawthorn to the holly yields :  
No twittering swallow skims the plain,  
No shrike - cock tunes his echoing strain :  
Dumb are the full - plum'd songsters all,  
Save the lone red - breast on my wall ;  
Thy tender lay, sweet bird, prolong,  
And footh old Winter with thy song !

When wintry mists obscure the skies,  
His busy nose the spaniel plies,

Where

*No shrike - cock, etc. ] The Shrike - cock or Mistle Thrush.*

Where mossy glades and thickets brown  
Tempt the far-wandering wood-cock down:  
Stretch thy strong wing, thy flight retake,  
Nor trust the inhospitable brake!—  
Ah, forc'd from the luxuriant ground,  
He mounts, and feels the sudden wound.  
So transmeridian Zealand views  
Adventurous Europe's wandering crews:  
Fierce hunger eyes the stranger-guest,  
And fraud secures the barbarous feast;  
Stain'd are the rocks with human gore,  
And white with scatter'd bones the shore.

The leveret — but I spare the rest,  
I see compassion touch thy breast—  
Come then, and whilst the murderous crew  
In harmless blood their hands imbrue,  
Rous'd to revenge by ravag'd flocks,  
Haste we to find the kennell'd fox.  
Hark! those preluding cries he hears;  
Thick beats his heart with conscious fears.

Some

Some tyrant thus, in luckless hour  
 Whom fraud or force has rais'd to pow'r,  
 With throbbing heart and pale eye stands,  
 And spreads to heaven his harpy hands,  
 When Freedom's voice alarms the morn,  
 And Vengeance winds her echoing horn.  
 See, with the wind he scours away  
 Sleek, and in crimes grown old and gray!  
 Oft has he foil'd our angry pack,  
 I know his customary track.  
 Talk not of pity to such foes!  
 Stern justice claims the life he owes.  
 No forms arise to screen his flight;  
 'Tis long till interrupting night;  
 The breathing South his sentence gives,  
 And not an hour the caitiff lives!  
 Through woods, and hills, and vales, and brakes,  
 NEEDWOOD with general transport shakes.  
 Mark how the pack diffusely spread,  
 And shew me, if you can, their head!  
 'Tis here—'tis there—now onward far  
 Streams down the vales irregular.

As

As through the furzy brakes they drive  
 The trembling coverts seem alive.  
 Thus by the winds o'er bending corn  
 Loose waves of light and shade are born.  
 Now winding up yon steep they strain ;  
 Now wheel in silence on the plain :  
 Again they catch the tainted wind ;  
 No hound disgraceful lurks behind :  
 All striving with confederate aim,  
 Their size, their power, their speed the same,  
 With eager eye and clamorous tongue  
 In broad career they press along,  
 Fierce on their victim gathering round—  
 —He suffers by no single wound !  
 Thus o'er the azure fields of night  
 Shoot the quick rays of northern light,  
 To one bright point converg'd they flow,  
 And round the silver zenith glow.  
 So, when a lake furcharg'd by rain  
 Bursts, and o'erwhelms the sloping plain,  
 The wond'ring rustic flies, nor knows  
 Which of its currents fastest flows ;

K

Now

Now here the rattling eddies lead,  
Now there they foam along the mead,  
Till in a silent pool they stand,  
Collected on the hollow land.

Go languid fops, go pedants, waste  
Your sneers on joys you cannot taste ;  
And cloak with many a vain pretence  
Cold-blooded fear and indolence !

Warm to each elegant delight,  
Ingenious, sensible, polite,  
Known to the world you know so well,  
Lov'd e'en by those whom you excel,  
MEYNELL, my leader and my friend,  
Stand forth ! the manly chase defend !  
O raise your animating voice,  
And cheer the Dian of your choice !  
Not her, whose foul Circean draft  
'Squires of preceding ages quaff'd,

Unletter'd

Unletter'd reveller, whose joys  
Were rudeness, turbulence, and noise,  
But her, no less of British kind,  
Well-bred, intelligent, refin'd,  
Of younger years and purer mold,  
Chaste as the Huntress Queen of old.

Yes, I am thine, enchanting maid!  
Come, in thy decent robes array'd!  
O bring thy blithe companion, Health,  
Who smiles, and mocks the sluggard Wealth;  
And Hope, who spleen and care destroys;  
And Rapture scorning tamer joys;  
Young Eagerness with kindling eyes;  
And Triumph mingling jocund cries!

Come, as thy cheerful train is seen,  
Where FOREMARKE waves his woodlands green;  
When hears his vale thy matin song,  
And TRENT exulting shouts along:

While



While wait, thy gay return to greet,  
Convivial Mirth and Welcome sweet.—  
On me, thy humbler votary, shower  
The balmy dews of every flower,  
Which oft thy curious hand has twin'd  
Thy BURDETT's favour'd brows to bind!

WHENCE

**W**HENCE, NEEDWOOD, that tremendous sound!—  
 —Low dying murmurs run around,  
 A deeper gloom the wood receives,  
 And horror shivers on the leaves,  
 Loud shrieks the henn, the raven croaks—  
 Destruction's arm arrests thy oaks!  
 Onward with giant strides he towers,  
 Dooms with dread voice thy withering bowers,  
 High o'er his head the broad axe wields,  
 Stamps with his iron foot, and shakes the fields!

When from her lawless rocks and sands  
 Arabia pours her ruffian bands,  
 The village hinds in wild distress  
 Around some holy hermit press  
 Orb within orb, their wrongs declare,  
 And ask his counsel and his prayer;  
 All white with age, inspir'd he stands,  
 And lifts to heaven his wrinkled hands!

L

So

*Destruction's arm, etc.* ] By order from the Dutchy Court of LANCASTER, to which  
 the forest of NEEDWOOD belongs, the timber is now felling under the direction of  
 an officer of that Court.

So seems the affrighted forest, drawn :  
 In crowds around this lonely lawn :  
 High in the midst with many a frown  
 Huge SWILCAR shakes his tresses brown,  
 Out-spreads his bare arms to the skies,  
 The ruins of six centuries,  
 Deep groans pervade his rifted rind—  
 —He speaks his bitterness of mind.  
 “Your impious hands, barbarians, hold !  
 “Ye pause! but fir’d with lust of gold,  
 “Your leader lifts his axe, and like  
 “Accursed JULIUS, bids you strike.  
 “Deaf are the ruthless ears of gain,  
 “And youth and beauty plead in vain.  
 “—Loud groans the wood with thick’ning strokes!  
 “Yes, ye must perish, filial oaks!  
 “In heaps your wither’d trunks be laid,  
 “And wound the lawns, ye used to shade;  
 “Whilst Avarice on the naked pile  
 “Exulting casts a hideous smile.  
 “Strike here! on me exhaust your rage,  
 “Nor let false pity spare my age!

“No

*Huge SWILCAR, etc.* ] SWILCAR Oak stands singly upon a beautiful small lawn surrounded with extensive woods,— it is of remarkable size, and supposed to be six hundred years old.

*Accursed JULIUS, etc.* ] CÆSAR cuts down a consecrated grove. LUCAN, lib. 3.

“No pity dwells with fordid slaves ;  
“’Tis want of worth alone that saves.  
“Yes, ye will leave me with disdain  
“A mouldring land - mark on the plain,  
“Where many a reign my trunk hath stood  
“Proud father of the circling wood.  
“In freedom’s dearest days I grew,  
“And HENRY’S jealous nobles knew ;  
“I saw them pierce the bounding game,  
“And heard their horn announce the claim.  
“No more, beneath my favorite shade,  
“The forest youth and village maid  
“Shall meet to plight their troth, and mark  
“Their loves memorial on my bark.

“Yet, yet, fond Hope, thy distant light  
“Beams unexpected on my sight ;  
“Lo VERNON hastes, the common friend !  
“The affrighted forest to defend ;

“ Bids

*In freedom’s dearest days, etc.* ] The charter of HEN. 3. confirms the privilege to Lords of parliament of killing a Deer or two in any of the royal forests in their way to or from parliament, in the presence of the keeper, or on blowing a horn in his absence. —’tis about six hundred years since that king reigned.

*Yet, yet, fond Hope, etc.* ] Upon the above order from the Dutchy Court, Ld. VERNON proposed an inclosure of some parts of the forest, for the preservation of the young timber, and the beauty of the place.

“Bids the keen axe the saplings spare,  
“And makes posterity his care.  
“Yes, Joy shall see these scenes renew’d,  
“Shall wake his sister Gratitude,  
“Shall call on lawns and hills and dells  
“The silent echoes from their cells,  
“Long trains of golden years proclaim,  
“And NEEDWOOD ring with VERNON’S name.”

He ceas’d, and shook his hoary brow :  
Glad murmurs fill the vale below,  
The deer in gambols bound along,  
The plighted birds resume their song.

Thrice - venerable Druid, hail !  
O may thy sacred words prevail,  
May NEEDWOOD’S oaks successive stand  
The lasting wonder of the land !—  
And may some powerful bard arise,  
Tho’ heaven to me that power denies,  
The POPE or DENHAM of his days,  
Whose lofty verse shall match their praise.

A D D R E S S  
T O  
S W I L C A R O A K,  
D E S C R I B E D  
I N M R. M U N D Y ' S P O E M  
O N  
N E E D W O O D F O R E S T,

**H**A I L, stately oak, whose wrinkled trunk hath  
stood

Age after age, the sov'reign of this wood ;  
You, who have seen a thousand springs unfold  
Their ravell'd buds, and dip their flowers in gold ;  
Ten thousand times yon moon relight her horn,  
And that bright eye of evening gild the morn.

M

Say

Say, when of old the snow-hair'd druids pray'd  
With mad-cy'd rapture in your hallow'd shade,  
While to their altars bards and heroes throng,  
And crouding nations join the ecstasick song;  
Did e'er such dulcet notes arrest your gales,  
As MUNDY pours along the lift'ning vales?

Yes, stately oak, thy leaf-wrapp'd head sublime  
Erelong must perish in the wrecks of time;  
Shou'd o'er thy brow the thunders harmless break,  
And thy firm roots in vain the whirlwinds shake,  
Yet must thou fall.— thy withering glories sunk,  
Arm after arm shall leave the mould'ring trunk!

But MUNDY'S verse shall consecrate thy name,  
And rising forests envy SWILCAR'S fame:  
Green shall thy gems expand, thy branches play,  
And bloom for ever in the immortal lay.

E. D.

( 47 )

A

# RURAL CORONATION,

Inscribed to Mr. MUNDY,

On reading his P O E M

O N

## NEEDWOOD FOREST.

**H**ASTE from your dells, your woods, and lawns,  
Nymphs, Naiads, Satyrs, Fays, and Fauns,  
Haste! hither bring your flowers and boughs,  
And weave a wreath for MUNDY'S brows!

First



First twigs of oak from SWILCAR rend,  
And round his auburn temples bend;  
Then tye the ends, that twisting meet,  
With tendrils from the wood-bine sweet:  
With laurel-blossoms next be spread  
Pale ivy crosswise o'er his head;  
These holly sprigs insert between,  
—The berries blush amid the green—  
While hare-bells blue, and lilies fair,  
Mix'd with the wild-rose, deck his hair.

Now with fantastick step advance,  
And hand in hand around him dance;  
To oaten pipe attune his lays,  
And hail the bard, who sings your praise.  
“ While the gay choirings of the grove  
“ Give breath to harmony and love,  
“ And golden furze and purple ling  
“ Around their mix'd embroidery fling,  
“ And, all irregularly join'd,  
“ Th' according outline waves behind.”

A. S.

## S O N N E T.

**M**UNDY, whose song hath taught the forest  
 strain

To view fair NEEDWOOD thro' the radiance clear  
 Of bright imagination, taught the tear  
 To glisten in his eye for other's pain,  
 And own that taste and virtue are not vain,  
 How was thy pipe melodious wont to cheer  
 The wintry groves, when every leaf was fear,  
 And brighten summer with it's artful strain!—  
 Say, by what meed shall NEEDWOOD court thy stay?  
 She unsuspecting twines in amorous care  
 Her favorite holly and her flower-bells gay,  
 To deck with modest hand her lover's hair,—  
 Ah, do not thou her gentle hope betray,  
 And doom her tender bosom to despair!

B. B.

*On Mr. MUNDY's Needwood Forest.*

WHERE NEEDWOOD's banks embroidered smile  
On bright-hair'd Dove, the british Nile,  
Pleas'd MUNDY fix'd his easel strong,  
And stretch'd his canvass wide and long;  
Broad o'er his hand the pallet lies  
With pencils for a thousand dyes.  
He look'd, and drew, and look'd again,—  
—Enamour'd Fancy snatch'd the pen,  
Nymphs, Graces, Loves around him throng,  
With all the sisterhood of song:  
Bright tints by fairy hands were mix'd,  
And Witchcraft etch'd the shades betwixt.

Delighted Flora smil'd and drew  
The primrose pale, and violet blue.  
A Naiad spreads the flake of snow,—  
White foams the glittering stream below.

“Give

*Flake of snow, etc. ] Flake-white.*

“Give me the pallet,” Love demands,  
And stretching forth his baby hands  
Dip’d with nice touch his keenest shaft  
In all the blushing lakes, and laugh’d;  
With sweetest grace the pencil flow’d,  
With softest tints the canvass glow’d;  
“I’ll draw Mamma,” the Wanton cries,  
And TALBOT’S features charm our eyes!  
With airy ease the white neck bends,  
Lock after lock the hair descends:  
O’er the fair form the Graces spread  
Their vest, and Hymen wreaths the head.

And then Thalia, muse of woe,  
Moves o’er the woof her crayon flow.  
Here, cold, bewilder’d, tir’d, forlorn,  
The Traveller sighs in vain for morn;  
Stretch’d on the imprinted snow he lies,  
And bends on heaven his stiffening eyes.  
There Friendship fits the shade beneath,  
And twines for CLARKE a fadefuls wreath;

Fresh

*Lakes, etc.* ] Carnation Colours.

Fresh cypresses with the flowers she weaves,  
And many a tear-drop gems the leaves.  
Next o'er the lawn a virgin throng  
In sad procession moves along,  
Lorn Loves inverted torches bear,  
And Pity weeps o'er VERNON's bier.

To shade the distant ground, and lay  
The rising group in bolder day,  
A Dryad chalks some dusky strokes,—  
Behind umbrageous frown her oaks!  
And SWILCAR, rent by many a storm,  
Rears high in air his leafless form.

Pleas'd MUNDY stood with eager eyes,  
And watch'd the living figures rise;  
Smil'd as the varying colours flow'd,  
And sigh'd by turns, and chill'd, and glow'd:  
And to the admiring world has shewn  
The immortal tablet for his own.

E. D. Jun



*Thomas Gibbons*

THE

FALL

OF

NEEDWOOD.

*Travis Park Clarke Handy*

---

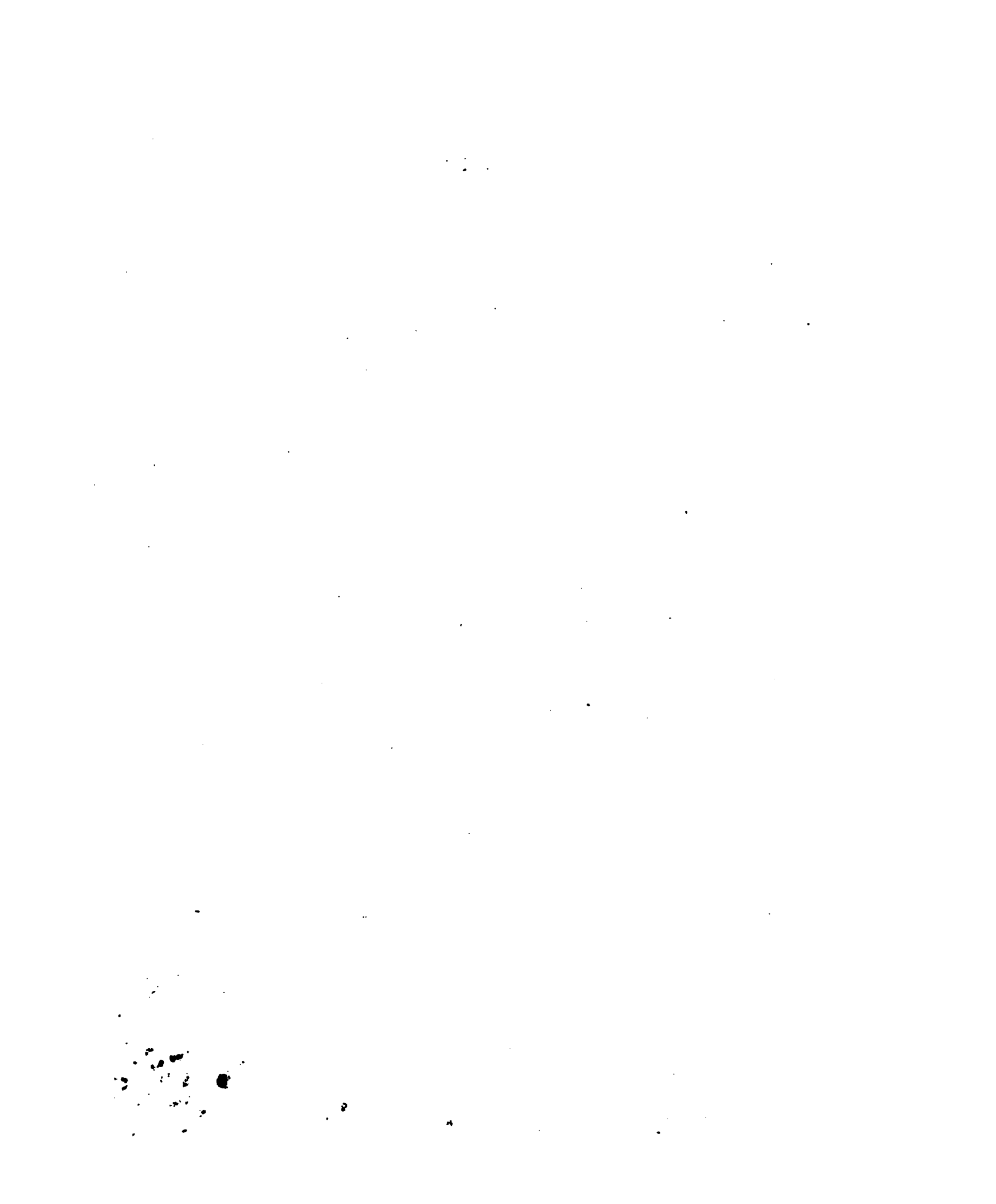
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## THE FALL OF NEEDWOOD.

---

AH, NEEDWOOD! I, whose early voice  
Taught thy shrill echoes to rejoice;  
I, who first pour'd the sylvan song  
Thy glades, thy banks, thy lawns along;  
I, who with artless pencil drew  
Thy Forest charms of varied hue,  
Approach thee now with different strain,  
That mourns thy wrongs, yet mourns in vain:

I come,



I come, but not with former haste,  
 To view the dim unshelter'd Waste,  
 That once was Needwood : on thy brow  
 No green-rob'd Wood-nymph beckons now :  
 Yet be thy Spirit sooth'd to bear  
 My Requiem through the void of air !

O Draycot Cliff! again thy height,  
 Known beacon of my young delight,  
 With sad'ning thoughts, that much portend  
 Of change and tumult, I ascend ;  
 Nor flatter'd by thy levell'd way,  
 That smiles, like worldlings, to betray.  
 'How swells my aged heart, now near  
 Scenes to my happiest youth so dear !  
 How sinks that heart, as these arise  
 Distorted, to my anguish'd eyes !  
 Where are those ample plains, display'd  
 'Mong woods with many an opening glade ?  
 Where is the wild doe bounding by,  
 Once emblem of their liberty?

No stragglers from the warren fleet  
 Scud cros my path with flirting feet.  
 No jealous blood-hound, brave and proud,  
 Throws from the lodge his challenge loud.

O hear me on thy fummits tall,  
 Time-honour'd Needwood ! hear my' call !  
 For thou my filial voice hast known.—  
 No answer follows—hark ! a groan !  
 His ancient seats I seek in vain ;  
 He, nor his ancient seats remain ;  
 But in strange horror staring round,  
 A Spectre, pointing to his wound,  
 Of hideous shape, with bald head, stalks  
 Before me o'er the ravag'd walks ;  
 Where Desolation grim affrights  
 Sham'd Ceres in unhallow'd rites ;  
 Where the check'd Plunderer shrinks aside,  
 As by his own deed terrified,

Or

---

*Where Desolation, etc.]* The trees in some parts have been so injudiciously fallen, that the tillage  
 of the ground is extremely difficult, or quite at a stand.

Or fears, from many a faithful root,  
Vengeance in ambush at his foot.

Wavering alike in mind and pace,  
I roam, familiar haunts to trace ;  
The winds, that bow me as I go,  
Rush unrestrain'd, as wild with woe,  
Or querulously vex'd to miss  
The blooming groves they lov'd to kiss.  
Each spot discover'd has its tale ;  
Seems a friend's voice in every gale ;  
Wak'd Recollection starts aghast,  
And thoughtful sighs o'er pleasures past.

When Nature, with exulting smile,  
Form'd from her stores this happy Isle,  
Curious, and bounteously intent  
To raise a central ornament,  
She cull'd the brightest and the best ;  
And heap'd them on her darling's breast :  
Sprung joyful to her warm embrace  
Th' appointed Genius of the Place ;

His

His features fair young Beauty drew ;  
 On her soft lap the fondling grew.  
 The Seasons came his birth to greet,  
 And pour'd their choicest at his feet ;  
 The Dryads quaintly curl'd his locks ;  
 Nymphs, Fauns, and Satyrs rush'd in flocks,  
 Pleas'd in such Fairy-land to dwell,  
 And peopled every bower and dell.  
 Kings mark'd the consecrated ground ;  
 And Power protective watch'd around.  
 Long Mercia sat beside enthron'd ;  
 And prouder crowns its honours own'd.  
 Delighted Ages list'ning heard  
 The wild hoof beat the tainted sword,  
 The glad'ning hound and echoing horn,  
 And hunters' shouts far onward born.

How

---

*Long Mercia sat beside enthron'd ;]* The magnificent site of the castle at Tutbury, no doubt was occupied by a considerable fort in or before the time of the Saxon heptarchy when it was the residence of the Kings and Earls of Mercia, who might alternately enjoy hence the pleasures of the chase in their adjoining forest of Needwood, or the satisfaction of security against an enemy.—*Shaw's History of Staffordshire.*

*And prouder crowns its honours own'd.]* See Needwood Forest, p. 23. of King's-Standing.

How did his dignity excel !  
Blush, blush ye Times when Needwood fell !

'Twas Avarice with his harpy claws,  
Great Victim ! rent thy guardian laws ;  
Loos'd Uproar with his ruffian bands ;  
Bade Havoc show his crimson'd hands ;  
Grinn'd a coarse smile, as thy last deer  
Dropp'd in thy lap a dying tear ;  
Exulted in his schemes accurst,  
When thy pierc'd heart, abandon'd, burst ;  
And, glozing on the public good,  
Insidious demon ! suck'd thy blood.  
Detested ever be that day,  
Which left thee a defenceless prey !  
May never fun its presence cheer !  
O be it blotted from the year !

Where now the Forest-freeman's boast ?  
His joys, his hopes, his name are lost.

Repentant

---

*Loos'd Uproar &c.*] The day of disafforesting presented an extraordinary scene of riot and disturbance, in consequence of the pursuit of the remaining deer by mobs from all parts.

Repentant claimants of the foil !  
 Your's keen remorse and thankless toil ;  
 Strangers and hirelings snatch the spoil. }  
 Too late ye mourn your glory gone ;  
 Too late the deed yourselves have done.  
 Thus, fell Owhyhee's senseless crew,  
 Him, their best friend, their idol, slew ;  
 Shar'd his torn limbs with savage pride ;  
 Then griev'd, infatuate ! that he died.  
 Ah, who but knows and loves the lay,  
 Which Seward hung on Cook's Morai ?  
 O had I such melodious tear,  
 Lamented Needwood, for thy bier !

Forests of England ! ye might claim  
 A proud share in her ancient fame.  
 Tell your forgetful country, tell,  
 When dangers dread her state befell,  
 How rush'd your sons in hardy bands,  
 Their long bows in their skilful hands ;

How

---

*Repentant claimants &c.* } It is believed that the freeholders now very generally regret the Inclosure.

How far the foremost and the best,  
 On fierce invading foes they press'd ;  
 With what sure aim their arrows flew,  
 Whistling the death song ere they flew.  
 You, in your secret labyrinths, spread  
 Your dark shields o'er great Alfred's head,  
 True to your charge. The ruthless Dane  
 Brandish'd his reeking blade in vain.  
 'Twas your's to nurse that mighty mind,  
 Where every Virtue sat enshrined.  
 Your hush'd leaves parted, as the beams  
 Of glory shot, and fir'd his dreams.

You

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*How far the foremost and the best,]* Though formerly the yeomanry of this kingdom were every where trained to the use of the long-bow, and excelled all other nations in the art of shooting, it may be reasonably presumed that the best archers were to be found in and near the forests.

*You in your secret labyrinths &c.]* Those scenes (forests in Somersetshire) will ever be famous in British history, while the remembrance continues of Alfred the Great. Frequent inundations of Danes and repeated losses had driven him from the management of affairs. But he retired before the enemies of his country only to attack them with more advantage. Seeing the time ripe for action he emerged from his retreat where he had been concealed, but not inactive during a twelvemonth ; called his friends together in the forest of Selwood, which sheltered him and his numbers. Here arranging his followers, he burst from the forest like a torrent upon the Danes, and totally defeated them.—*Gilpin's Forest Scenery, Hume, &c.*

*Your hush'd leaves &c.]* Alfred on the night of his retirement from the Danes, it is said, had a vision of St. Cuthbert, comforting and assuring him he should be a great King.—*Camden's Britannia.*

You fann'd his patriot bosom's glow ;  
 You tun'd his harp ; you trimm'd his bow.  
 He imag'd in your wolves his foes ;  
 And practis'd Vengeance keener rose.  
 Your proud oaks lean'd to court the hand,  
 Which England's conquering navy plann'd.  
 Your song-birds taught him to convey  
 Mild manners in attractive lay ;  
 While Liberty, the nymph you love,  
 Braided the filken bands he wove.  
 On circled lawns, in secret glade,  
 You marshall'd thousands to his aid,  
 Then gave him from your woods to shine  
 A Cæsar and an Antonine.  
 There the bright wreaths of Victory grew ;  
 And Themis pluck'd her wand from you.

Rouz'd

---

*You tun'd his harp, you trimm'd his bow.]* He was skilful in the use of both.

*Your proud oaks lean'd]* He provided himself with a naval power, which though the most natural defence of an island, had hitherto been totally neglected by the English.

*Your song-birds]* He endeavoured to convey his morality to his subjects by apologues, parables, stories, and apothegms couch'd in poetry.

*While Liberty &c.]* Amidst the necessary rigor of justice this great Prince preserved the most sacred regard to the liberty of his people.



Rouz'd vigorous by the morning air,  
 So quits the monarch stag his lair ;  
 With fresh fray'd beams his rival seeks ;  
 His meditated vengeance wreaks ;  
 And, stamping on the mountain's brow,  
 Claims homage from the vale below.

On yonder castled cliff of old,  
 Needwood, how throng'd thy archers bold,  
 When there, for deeds of arms array'd,  
 His banner princely Gaunt display'd !  
 And fill'd they not his chosen ranks  
 On distant Ebro's oliv'd banks ?

Spain's

*Lair*] The couch or harbour of a wild beast. *Milton.*

*With fresh fray'd beams &c.*] As soon as the new horns (or beams) of a stag have acquired their full dimensions and solidity, he rubs them against the trees in order to clear them of a skin with which they are covered.—*Buffon.* To fray (*frayer, Fr.*) is the hunting term for this operation.

*On yonder castled cliff &c.*] Tutbury castle, the residence of John of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster.

*And fill'd they not &c.*] The Duke of Lancaster greatly distinguished himself in a battle fought between Najara and Navarete near the Ebro in Spain in 1367. He commanded the 1st battalion of the English army.—*Johnes's Froissart.*

Spain's boasted slingers ! soon ye fled  
 From English bowmen, Forest-bred.  
 Fame stak'd her dearest honours there :  
 And won not Needwood's sons their share ?

Illustrious History, bear me back  
 Up golden Time's recorded track,  
 And bring from thy illumin'd page  
 The heroes of that martial age,  
 When knightly valour's own right hand  
 Sought fame, and spoil, and high command !  
 Say, as they pass in bright review,  
 What favourite takes precedence due !  
 They come—the pride and pomp of war  
 Mark their disastrous course afar.  
 Ah, while the mad'ning trumpet brays,  
 Fields reek with blood and cities blaze ;  
 Fell cries for glory or a crown  
 The shrieks of wives and orphans drown.

See

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*Spain's boasted slingers &c.*] The Spanish commonalty made use of slings, to which they were accustomed, & from which they threw largestones which at first much annoyed the English : but when their first cast was over, and they felt the sharpness of the English arrows, they kept no longer any order.—*Jaknes's Froissart.*

See English Richard's crest advance!—  
 Back from the lightning of his lance!  
 Hark! nations hail in loud accord  
 His lion heart and victor sword.  
 Cease, cease thy boasting, clarion vain!  
 Truth gives my lyre a purer strain.  
 Blush, as thy people, haughty king,  
 Shout for the man thy Minstrels bring,  
 And offer, with less guilty claim,  
 A Forest Yeoman's humble name!  
 How sweetly pours that bugle shrill  
 It's mellow tones o'er dale and hill,  
 As Sherwood's Hero, down the glade,  
 Steps with his bow and bright brown blade,

His

---

*Hark! nations hail &c.*] Alluding to his prowess and fame in the Crusades.

*The man thy Minstrels bring.*] As the subject of their historic ballads. The minstrels were much encouraged in this King's reign.

*As Sherwood's Hero, &c.*] The severity of those tyrannical forest-laws that were introduced by our Norman Kings, and the great temptation of breaking them by such as lived near the royal forests, must constantly have occasioned great numbers of outlaws, and especially of such as were the best marksmen. These naturally fled to the woods for shelter, and forming into troops endeavoured by their numbers to protect themselves from the dreadful penalties of their delinquency. This will easily account for the troops of banditti, which formerly lurked in the Royal forests, and from their superior skill in archery and knowledge of the recesses of those unfrequented solitudes, found it no difficult matter to resist or elude the civil power. Among those, none was ever more famous than Robin Hood,

His feather'd arrows, broad and keen,  
 Hung lightly o'er his gown of green !  
 A robber! say'st thou? Thy harsh laws,  
 Oppressor, and the poor man's cause  
 Led him, indignant, to the wood,  
 With bold pretence of rights withstood.  
 Churls, with no feeling but for self,  
 Yield to his better hands your pelf !  
 Such trespasses Fear disdains to hide ;  
 And hoodwink'd Justice peeps aside.  
 The liberal air his freeborn soul  
 Lifts high, in scorn of base controul.

In

---

Hood, the Hero of Sherwood forest ; of whom Stow's account is briefly thus.—“ In this time (about the year 1190, in the reign of Richard 1st) were many robbers and outlaws, among the which Robin Hood and Little John, renowned thieves, continued in woods despoiling and robbing the goods of the rich. They killed none but such as would invade them, or by resistance for their own defence. The saide Robert entertained an hundred tall men and good archers with such spoiles and thefts as he got, upon whom four hundred (were they ever so strong) durst not give the onset. He suffered no woman to be oppressed, violated, or otherwise molested : poor mens goods he spared abundantlie, relieving them with that, which by theft he got from Abbeyes and the houses of rich Carles.” The personal courage of this celebrated outlaw, his skill in archery, his humanity, and especially his levelling principle of taking from the rich and giving to the poor, have in all ages rendered him the favourite of the common people. He was in early times the favourite subject of popular songs.—*Percy's Reliques of antient English Poetry, 1st vol.*

*Bright brown blade, broad arrows, gown of green,*] is the language of the ballads.

In fellowship and fealty bound,  
 Firm as the knights of Table Round,  
 Him and his hundred, tall and fleet,  
 Not twice two hundred care to meet.  
 Minions, oppose not his career !  
 He seeks no slaughter, but of deer.  
 Yet will he pass unquestion'd by :  
 Raise but your weapons and ye die !  
 Start not fair maids ! your path pursue  
 Unharm'd ; he guards its peace for you ;  
 And cheers, on each occasion kind,  
 In age or want, the hamlet hind.  
 Here, warriors, to the Forest turn,  
 True courage and its use to learn !  
 Here, nobles, to the wood resort,  
 For courtesy unknown at court !—  
 Needwood, this brave man was thy guest ;  
 Love crown'd the day, and Mirth the feast.

Region,

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*Needwood, this brave man &c.*] See in Robin Hood's garland a ballad; (quoted in Shaw's History of Staffordshire) giving an account of Robin Hood's visit to Tutbury; and of his marriage there with Clorinda; \_\_\_\_\_ The relation of the forest to Tutbury will probably admit of this consideration of them as one and the same.

Region, where all delights were found,  
 How look'ft thou now ? a burial ground !  
 With sad memorials, here and there,  
 Of what was noble, free, and fair.  
 King's-standing, with a tortur'd frown,  
 Marks its own splendour overthrown.  
 Whate'er of wood or lawn could please,  
 Whate'er of hills that rang'd with ease,  
 In grand affemblage broad display'd,  
 This far commanding mount survey'd.  
 How chang'd ! those oaks, that tower'd so high,  
 Dismember'd, stript, extended, lie ;  
 On the stain'd turf their wrecks are pil'd,  
 Where thousand Summers bask'd and smil'd ;  
 In smouldering heaps their limbs confume ;  
 The dark smoke marks their casual tomb ;  
 From blacken'd brakes, the choak'd winds tofs  
 The ashes of the golden gofs ;

While

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*King's-standing, &c.*] See Needwood Forest, page 23.

*On the stain'd turf their wrecks are pil'd,*] Bark-ranges.

*In smouldering heaps, &c.*] Making charcoal.

*From blacken'd brakes,*] Burning the furze-brakes.—Goss.—*Bailey's Dictionary*.

While great with power, yon Wretch derides  
 And boasts the mischief, which he guides.  
 Thus, when, in unsuspecting peace,  
 Rush'd Scythia's hordes on fertile Greece,  
 Mars, their grim god, whom heaven abhors,  
 Urg'd with fell taunts to wasteful wars.

Valley! where Marebrook, all unveil'd,  
 Her slender line, far shining, trail'd,  
 With frequent curves thy slopes between,  
 As loth to quit the enticing scene ;  
 Or turning with young fawns to play,  
 Wily and volatile as they ;  
 Alluring, with her tinkling sweet,  
 From bank to bank their timid feet ;  
 Lov'd Valley ! now no charm invites  
 My steps to rove these injur'd heights ;  
 Thy wavy knolls the fence arrests ;  
 The rude spade wounds thy swelling breasts ;  
 Rent her fair locks and mantle rich,  
 Forlorn along that hateful ditch

---

*Yon Wretch*] Surveyor or overlooker.

*Valley ! where Marebrook, all unveil'd,*] This Valley nearly bisected the Forest in beautifully varied windings, though without trees of any kind on its sides, or on the verge of its little stream, Marebrook, the course of which was remarkably flexuous ; but is now actually turned down the straight fence-ditch.

Thy violated Naiad steals,  
And in foul streams her shame conceals.

These broad roots bore a secret grove,  
Where I was wont at eve to rove ;  
And, while low-thoughted cares retired,  
Wrapp'd in fond musings, Fancy-fir'd,  
Saw what alone the mind's eye sees ;  
Heard other whisperings than the breeze ;  
And knights and dames, and dwarfs portray'd,  
And bright arms gleaming down the glade ;  
Drew Magic, muttering powerful spell ;  
And Witchcraft with demoniac yell.  
Hark ! the last trunk that axe affails ;  
See ! the plough tears the writhing vales ;  
Stop, thoughtless clown ! nor dare to bring  
Destruction on that Fairy-Ring,  
Imprinted deep with stainless green,  
And lasting beauty, seldom seen.  
E'en Winter paus'd that turf to spare ;  
Nor look'd the fiery Dog-star there.

And



And once more may Titania come,  
 With farewell, to her ancient home;  
 But, for the bee bird's gaudy plume,  
 Wav'd o'er her neck in quivering bloom,  
 Funereal spray of dismal hue,  
 Of cypress, or the baleful yew,  
 Join'd with the nightshade's deadly flow'r,  
 Shall darkly o'er her forehead low'r.  
 Attendant Fays, in mournful throng,  
 Nor trace the dance, nor raise the song;  
 While, for the shrill reed's cheerful sound,  
 That led them lightly tripping round,  
 Beetles and drones, with hummings low,  
 Measure their footfalls sad and slow.—  
 Alas, no gentle sprite remains!  
 But foul fiends scour th' affrighted plains,  
 Rob of their honours hills and lawns,  
 Trace the mean ditch that greedy yawns,  
 And teach the reptile hedge to crawl;  
 Twin pests, confederate, seizing all.

What

What old man with his gray dog fits,  
 What blind man, by those sandy pits?  
 'Tis Manuel!—and he rests him, where  
 My fox-earth was his nightly care.—  
 Ah, come not now to scenes so drear,  
 Gay hunters! scenes ye cannot cheer.  
 Ah venture not their threats to brave;  
 Nor trample on your Needwood's grave!—  
 'Tis Manuel! and he knows my voice:  
 His tears, tho' not his eyes, rejoice:  
 Reduc'd by age and loss of sight  
 To beggary and the parish mite,  
 That dog his only guide, he picks,  
 Groping in fear, those wretched sticks.  
 But soon will such small gleanings end.—  
 Thou, Needwood, wast the poor man's friend!

Garden of Nature! on whose face  
 Contended fragrance, bloom, and grace;  
 Kind nurse of her abundant good  
 To human wants, from herb or wood,

Tho'

---

*Manuel.*] The Forest earth-stopper in the hunting days of the author.

Tho' seem the withering winds less rude  
 Than thoughtless man's ingratitude ;  
 Not all thy children droop forlorn,  
 Hurl'd from magnificence to scorn.  
 You, fox-gloves, through the varying year  
 Fresh, vigorous and countless here,  
 You, happy fox-gloves, as you fell,  
 In triumph clos'd each purple bell ;  
 Proud that the bark of fam'd Peru  
 Was rival'd, British plant, by you.  
 Philosophy and Science rare  
 Had pitied Dropsy's sad despair,  
 And pour'd your healing treasure forth ;  
 While their own Bard extoll'd your worth ;  
 Poet and Sage : hence doubly shine  
 Your honours on Hygiea's shrine,  
 Where pleas'd Apollo stoop'd to yield  
 To Darwin's hand his lyre and shield.

~~Gigantic~~

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*You fox-gloves, &c ] See Digitalis—Loves of the plants, p. 78.*

“ The effect of this plant (the fresh leaves of which may be had at all seasons of the year) in that kind of Dropsy which is termed anasarca is truly astonishing.”

*Lyre and shield.] As the God of Medicine, giving health and safety, Apollo is sometimes described with a shield, as well as a lyre.*

Again, to save this fair domain,  
 A Vernon strove, but strove in vain;  
 And many a noble heart was warm  
 The fell devourer's rage to charm;  
 But mean Self-interest lit the flame,  
 Blind Furies fann'd; and Ruin came.

Yet Limbrook prattles, in her pride,  
 Of ancient scenery on her side,  
 Calls, where her beauties still prevail,  
 To Byrkley Bowers and Yoxall Dale,  
 Boasts of deep shades and allies green,  
 And bids me mark that Forest mien,  
 Pleas'd, in this circlet, to secure  
 Her injur'd parents miniature;  
 And fain would cheer me, as she leads  
 By cultur'd banks to verdant meads;

---

*Again to save &c.*] See Needwood Forest, p. 43.

*And many a noble heart &c.*] Alluding to the opposition to the Inclosure.

*Yet Limbrook, &c.*] This rivulet rises on the late Forest and takes its course through an extensive valley on the brow of which stands Byrkley Lodge, and proceeds downwards by Yoxall Lodge: some beautiful Forest scenes have been added to the old Inclosures of these Lodges, where are shrubberies and sheets of water.

And spreads her mirrors to reflect  
 How Nature's hand-maid, Art, hath deck'd  
 The matron here, with choicest bloom;—  
 Ah, garlands now for Needwood's tomb!

Limbrook! protected child and heir,  
 Enjoy thy patrimony fair;  
 And ever, in thy favour'd bound,  
 Prosperity and Peace be found.  
 Yet long wilt thou lament the change  
 Of herds and flocks, that near thee range,  
 More loudly to thy rushes chide,  
 Since comes no doe her fawn to hide;  
 And long thy murmuring stream will shrink,  
 When stoops the stranger ewe to drink;  
 And long those oaks, Destruction spar'd,  
 Grieve for the greatness, once they shar'd,  
 And sigh, while, ages hence, appear  
 The tracks of their remember'd deer,

---

*And ever, in thy favour'd bound,]* Applying the whole scenery around these lodges to Limbrook.

*When stoops the stranger ewe to drink;]* Sheep were not depastur'd on the Forest.

*The tracks of their remember'd deer,]* It is said that the Wolf-tracks may yet be seen in some parts which those animals frequented, in Ireland, centuries ago.

And scatter, carelefs, to the wind,  
Fruits, for their Autumn feast design'd.

Thus, when that monster of the world  
Thy nobles from their honours hurl'd,  
Oh France ! a few, to fate resign'd,  
All loft, but dignity of mind,  
Still on the general wreck abide,  
Terror and Tyranny beside,  
And privileg'd in fall'n estate,  
Walk humbly with the power they hate,  
Regretful of their happier times,  
And fighting o'er a nation's crimes.

Yet Byrkley Bowers, your Emma's art  
Such sweet delusion can impart,  
Such truth her curious pencil gives,  
That Needwood in its magic lives.

---

*Monster of the world*] French Revolution.

*Emma's art*] Miss Emma Sneyd, of Byrkley Lodge, has produced some beautiful landscapes and drawings of the Forest scenes.

O, haste to catch, ingenious maid,  
 His remnant beauties ere they fade :  
 So to th' admiring world be shown  
 Fair forms, accomplish'd like your own !

Though aptly might these dells retain  
 Wild Fancy and her sylvan train,  
 I ask no fabled nymph to lend  
 Her idle aid, as I descend ;  
 I seek not such attendants here ;  
 But hail your presence and revere,  
 Truth, Genius, Science !—Yoxall Dale,  
 'Mong Forest Walks distinguish'd, hail !  
 Enough, that future times will say :  
 “ Here Gisborne penn'd his moral lay,  
 “ Practis'd the duties he enjoin'd,  
 “ Led and instructed human kind,  
 “ Here the high paths of Nature trod,  
 “ And saw and glorified her God.”

---

“ *Here Gisborne penn'd his moral lay,*] The character and writings both in verse and prose of the Rev. Thomas Gisborne, of Yoxall Lodge, are equally well known and admired: the public has lately called for a seventh edition of his “ *Walks in a Forest.*”

Gigantic hollies ! many a year  
 Your lopp'd limbs fed the pining deer ;  
 And many a year, your growth renew'd,  
 In venerable solitude,  
 With arch and column, here you stood,  
 As once the Temple of the Wood.  
 The seasons wrought not on your form ;  
 You bent not to the battering storm ;  
 Arrested on each shrouded brow,  
 No wanton sunbeams pry'd below.—  
 Respected veterans ! favourite glade !  
 Oft, as I pac'd your pensive shade,  
 Rapt Meditation mus'd in prayer ;  
 Or self-indulgence soften'd care.—  
 These, Needwood, thy destroyers saw  
 And seiz'd, uncheck'd by shame or awe !

Fair Virgin ! in that hallow'd gloom,  
 While the bell knoll'd thee to thy tomb,

I

---

*Gigantic hollies !*] Particular groups of hollies of great age and size are here alluded to, as in *Needwood Forest* p. 19. Having been lopped for the deer in winter, (the upper part of their remaining trunks and branches being again clothed with their fresh evergreen shoots) they had somewhat the appearance of ruins.

*Fair Virgin !*] The Hon. Catharine Venable Vernon died in the summer of 1775.



I chose a polish'd trunk, to mark  
 Thy memory on its yielding bark :  
 As held in reverence profound,  
 The grove was motionless around,  
 Save that an ivy's stragling leaf  
 Shook in the breathings of my grief ;  
 Watch'd Pity through her starting tears,  
 Numbering too soon thy transient years ;  
 Lorn Loves, that knew thee well, were by ;  
 And Sorrow with reverted eye.  
 Yes ; " thou wast all that youth admires,  
 A parent seeks, or friend desires !"

Ah, if yet spar'd, to that lone shrine  
 Direct me, some remaining sign !  
 Or whispering airs instruct to find,  
 Soft as ye kiss the swelling rind !  
 Or gentle red-breast hop before !—  
 No ; those retirements are no more.—  
 See the griev'd wood-dove on her flight !  
 And the scar'd owlet lost in light !

**Hark !**

Hark ! the same bell !—take, sister bier,  
 Affection's sigh and friendship's tear !  
 These for ourselves :—for thee, blest shade !  
 Amply thy debt of life was paid ;  
 And gentle, as that life, thy fall ;—  
 Rest honour'd, as belov'd by all !  
 Rest, while the parting Virtues bear  
 For heaven's approval, thy record fair !  
 In yonder cloud that lowers above,  
 Darkening the cheerful face of Dove,  
 Their white plumes glimmer to the eye,  
 And radiant arms extend on high.

Yes, Holly-Bush !—endeared spot !  
 Forsaken long, but ne'er forgot !  
 Yes, Holly-Bush ! through all disguise  
 I know thee, but with watery eyes !  
 With thee what warm emotions start !  
 What passions press upon my heart !

Quick

---

*Hark the same bell !—take, sister bier,*] The Hon. Martha Venables Vernon died while the  
 Author was writing this poem.

*Yes, Holly-Bush !*] Formerly the residence of the Author, where many alterations have since  
 been made and are making.

Quick rushes my own change to view ;  
 And wounds, yet tender, bleed anew.  
 I come not now to treasur'd sweets ;  
 Blank my approach ; no welcome greets ;  
 No lifted fash, no smiling face  
 Salutes me, joyous from the chase ;  
 No ready grooms my call await ;  
 Leaps on its hinge no friendly gate ;  
 Not for my meal that kitchen's blaze ;  
 Thy people on a stranger gaze ;  
 And, for the fox-hound cowering bland,  
 Bays the fierce house-dog at his stand.  
 Yet, as my doubtful step withdraws,  
 Fresh memories plead for longer pause ;  
 While mixes with each faint farewell  
 What only struggling sighs can tell.

Yes, Holly-Bush !—here fled too fast  
 Fair hours, most valued now they're past.  
 But not, in my regard, import  
 These structures of a prouder sort ;

And

And former fondness ill can brook  
 This order'd dress and inland look ;  
 Thy flowery copse and bowers make room  
 For alien shrubs and new perfume ;  
 Thy meek rill swells with glaring brim ;  
 Thy rude paths march through gardens trim ;  
 Ah, here no unambitious brow,  
 Nor my contented dwelling now !

But thou remainest, favourite Tree !  
 Extend thy friendly canopy !  
 Ah ! know me, footh me, in my age,  
 And cheer this mournful pilgrimage !

Hall ! whose kind arm is stretch'd between  
 The spoiler and yon Forest scene,

Its

---

*Inland look ;]* In contradistinction to its former forest character, in which sense this word is repeatedly used by Shakespear in "As you like it," though then applied to persons.

*Unambitious brow &c.]* Needwood Forest p. 8.—*Favourite Tree Sycamore ;]* Needwood Forest p. 10.

*Hall, whose kind arm &c.]* T. K. Hall, Esq. has purchased Holly Bush with a considerable portion of the adjacent Forest land, the scenery of which he intends to preserve.

Its green vale with its wooded banks,  
 (And Needwood's honour owes thee thanks)  
 Save too this suppliant at thy door,  
 O save my spreading Sycamore !  
 It gave my window breezes sweet,  
 And shelter when the tempest beat ;  
 When wild bees humm'd its boughs among,  
 Or cooing stock-dove watch'd her young,  
 Oft have I sat beneath its shade,  
 And bless'd my children, as they play'd.  
 Ah ! let not Taste, with upstart pride,  
 This old domestic thrust aside ;  
 This relic, generous owner ! spare  
 To Needwood's earliest poet's prayer :  
 So prosper here thy fair designs ;  
 So Beauty lend thee her own lines ;  
 So here all social Pleasures throng ;  
 And sweet Enjoyment flourish long.

Revered Swilcar ! kingly Oak !  
 Ill spar'd from thee th' affassin's stroke.

How

How brilliant was thy sylvan court !  
 Of sons and subjects proud resort ;  
 Here stately rang'd in close array ;  
 There lightly group'd on carpets gay ;  
 Attendant hollies glow'd beneath,  
 All arm'd ; their crest a woodbine wreath.  
 In safety skip'd the dappled herds ;  
 Securely perch'd the choring birds ;  
 O'er charter'd ground thy broad shade spread ;  
 In freedom wav'd thy sacred head,  
 Where age had whiten'd many a stem,  
 And plac'd an antler'd diadem.

Horrid !—I see thee far—defac'd—  
 In fetters on a dreary waste,  
 With outstretch'd arms and bosom bare,  
 Appealing to the troubled air ;  
 Yet taxing not the pelting storm ;  
 But those, more cruel, who deform

Thy

---

*Horrid !—I see thee far !*] The present appearance of Swilcar-oak over a broad and hitherto uncultivated part of the late Forest, where not another tree remains, is very striking. He is fenced off from a new road.

Thy rich retreats, thy turf defile  
 With fence, and road, and uses vile ;  
 Nor of the whole, which Nature gave,  
 Leave thee enough to make thy grave,  
 When comes, as come it must, thy fall,  
*Lear* of the Forest, robb'd of all !

Enough ; and from my trembling hand  
 Drops the sad lyre.—Abused Land,  
 Take my last strains ! in happier days  
 I tun'd my rude horn to thy praise ;  
 And (all I wish'd) the friends I lov'd  
 Those unassuming notes approv'd ;  
 And some, with strength beyond its own,  
 In sweeter echoes cheer'd the tone ;  
 To swell *this* tear, which sorrow drew,  
 Do *they* remain ?—alas how few !

Swilcar ! from thee a wither'd bough  
 Will best become my temples now.

And

---

*And some, with strength &c.*] Alluding to the complimentary verses printed with Needwood Forest, and others afterwards sent to the author.

And pendent here my shell I leave  
 Mournfully mute ; save when, at eve,  
 While Silence lifts on brooding wings,  
 Soft airs shall brush the murmuring strings :  
 So still be fond complaint preferr'd,  
 Its master's voice no longer heard !

Then haply some, who wander near  
 Musing, may lend a partial ear ;  
 And if thy venerable age,  
 And awful size their hearts engage,  
 If Nature's wood-wild walks they love,  
 If violated grandeur move,  
 Ah, will not indignation rise,  
 As Fancy views with weeping eyes,  
 Nymphs, Satyrs, Fauns, in cheerless row,  
 And Dian with a broken bow ;  
 Hears Druid's groan and Dryad's shriek  
 Oft through the moonlight stillness break,  
 Yon prison'd cliffs their griefs repeat,  
 Dove howling hoarsely at their feet ?

Region !—

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*Yon prison'd cliffs*] The banks and cliffs of the Forest, hanging towards the river Dove, are now fenced in, though otherwise left in their former state.



Region !—I lov'd thee at my heart—  
 Farewell !—for ever now we part.  
 Foreft farewell !—delighted Time  
 Thee would have spar'd in endless prime ;  
 Me, as he shakes my ebbing sands,  
 While MORTAL LIFE her roll expands,  
 Me, feebly bending o'er thy tomb,  
 He beckons to her COMMON HOME.—  
 Ah, human weaknefs ! may a name,  
 Aspiring to no splendid fame,  
 Live, yet a little, in my SONGS  
 Of NEEDWOOD'S PRAISE and NEEDWOOD'S  
 WRONGS !

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MY GRAND CLIMACTERIC. 1802.

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As one, who journeys over unknown lands,  
 Ere yet the sun withdraws his western ray,  
 Stops on some mountain's brow, whose site commands  
 The shifting scenes and labyrinths of the way;

With fond reverted look his thoughts retrace,  
 Where flowers their sweets, and wild-birds gave their  
 song,  
 And dwell, long dwell! on many a favourite space,  
 Where prodigal of time he loiter'd long;

Lovers and friends in bright perspective rise,  
 Companions of his morn, on yon blue hill;  
 Down that blank plain he drops a look, and sighs,  
 Whence seem their parting words to reach him still;

Here

Here his pain'd eyes unkindly districts mark,  
 Where faint heats smote him or fierce storms o'ertook;  
 There strain o'er deep'ning woods at noonday dark,  
 Where his false steps their destin'd course forfook;

Pond'ring the change and chances of the day,  
 As warning eve prepares her veil to close,  
 Serious, he now proceeds with short survey,  
 Expecting night's dark hour, and hoping calm repose :

So I look back on more than sixty years,  
 In life's sequester'd walks obscurely spent,  
 Where tho' its trophied head no column rears,  
 Inscib'd with mighty deed, or proud event,

Yet, on some few small eminencies, glow  
 The heart's rejoicing-lights of self-applause;  
 Some generous claims surmount the gloom below,  
 And shame and sharp regrets a moment pause;

Yet

Yet these prevail—ah! might my wish prevail  
That Time would turn my near exhausted glafs;  
Then not a grain should of its harvest fail;—  
Seeds are but sands when unimprov'd they pass.

Vain wish! vain promise! what dost thou presume,  
O weak Humanity? thyself but dust!  
Since from the cradle, hourly, to the tomb,  
Toil, trifle, err and grieve, frail thing! thou must.

But pleasures, passions lose their dangerous force;  
And the world's business shrinks as age descends:  
O spare Adversity! my evening course;  
My little part is play'd, my small importance ends.

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*To F. N. C. MUNDY, Esq.*

ON HIS POEM

THE FALL OF NEEDWOOD.

POET of Needwood, much my heart approves  
This thy ow'd duty to his ravag'd groves,  
The lost! the lovely! who in better days  
View'd their each grace reflected in thy lays;  
And O! when many a future Age has pass'd,  
Rolling oblivious o'er his nameless Waste,  
Its sometime beauties shall again revive,  
And in thy pictur'd strains for EVER live.

Come, pensive listening, ye once jocund Throng,  
Whilome that rov'd those forest-haunts along;  
Explor'd, with pleasure brightening in your air,  
Each coy, green labyrinth and each turfy lair,  
Still, as in pride of youth, the wanton Spring  
Expanded to the Sun her showery wing,  
And cliffs, illustrious in their golden bloom,  
Rose o'er the glades of light-besprinkled gloom.

Nor absent ye when Summer's fervid Hours  
 Dropt more luxuriant curtains on the Bowers,  
 And the vast Oak's writh'd arms of dusky green  
 Shadow'd the dappled Tenants of the Scene,  
 With rival Elm, whose mossy trunk appears  
 Out-numbering far the lonely Eagle's years.

Nor when the Months consummate, left their vales  
 To Suns less ardent, less benignant gales,  
 And Autumn painted, with his tawny hand,  
 The shrinking foliage, and in colours bland  
 Streak'd the pale red with purple, faint and brief,  
 And tipt with tarnish'd gold each trembling leaf.

Nor e'en when Phœbus' Steeds, no longer fleet,  
 With mane dishevel'd streaming to their feet,  
 Struggling thro' clouds, th' hybernal Solstice gain,  
 Their necks bedropt with globes of freezing rain,  
 And the loud Tyrant of the dying Year  
 Stript OTHER Groves, made OTHER Forests fear;  
 For Needwood to his sway disdain'd to yield;  
 His polish'd umbrage an unfailing shield,  
 Those numerous hollies on his breast and brow,  
 That thrust their scarlet clusters thro' the snow,

Or spread their glossy leaves to transient rays  
 The rebel Glory of the icy days.

Nor if, ere yet arisen, dim Morning heard  
 Your lightheel'd Coursers paw the dewy sward,  
 When the sly Prowler stole adown the wind,  
 And hop'd he left no tell-tale scent behind.  
 Vain hope! your swift staunch hounds the search began,  
 To right and left their hurrying numbers ran,  
 Till found the taint, in streaming files they hie,  
 And in one shrill, continuous, clamouring cry,  
 To which th' accordant Forest joyous rings,  
 Hang on his rear, while o'er the vale he springs,  
 Dash through the rhimy glades, and round the hills  
 As when receiving tribute brooks and rills  
 O'er flinty bed a River foams and roars,  
 Loud and impatient of meandering shores;  
 Or, deepen'd, shews the Sun his mirror'd face,  
 Or zones with silver light the mountain's base.

Now come, with Mundy, where the Ruin lowers!  
 He hymns the dirge of the devastated Bowers.  
 Echo his wailings o'er their fallen state,  
 Whom Centuries hail'd irregularly great.

Come, execrate the Edict that destroy'd,  
 Leaving Time-hallow'd Needwood bare and void !  
 There fell Imagination's rural fane !  
 Thence fled fair-shafted Dian's votive Train,  
 All which the Bard, entranc'd, in forest sees,  
 Satyrs and Fauns and leaf-crown'd Dryades.  
 They fled when Avarice, with rapacious frown,  
 From Mercia's temples struck her sylvan crown.

Yet, gentle Minstrel, they whose raptur'd ears  
 Drank thy sweet Song in the departed years ;  
 Saw oaken wreaths thy auburn brows entwine,  
 The well-won meed at Needwood's shadowy shrine,  
 Shall find thy Gratulation's vivid glow  
 Match'd by thy Requiem in its mournful flow ;  
 The orb of Mundy's Muse-illumined day  
 Setting with rival tho' with milder ray ;  
 Pleas'd shall compare the evening with the noon,  
 And feel, in equal power, the Cypress Garland won.

ANNA SEWARD.

---

Milton, in *Comus*, makes *Naiades* the plural of *Naiad*, "amid the flowery-kirtled *Naiades*."



## IMPROMPTU.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE NEW POEM, ENTITLED

## THE FALL OF NEEDWOOD.

OCTOBER, 1808.

WHEN Poesy, the Child of Zeal,  
 Who soothes each Pang, that Earth can feel,  
 Beheld, at wounded Nature's call,  
 That Scene of Horror, Needwood's Fall !  
 She said, in haste to yield Relief,  
 And calm the Mighty Mother's Grief :  
 " Nature ! dear Parent ! Power divine !  
 Whose Joys and Grievs are truly mine !  
 To you my sympathy devotes  
 My chearful, and my plaintive Notes :  
 With Feelings not to be suppress'd,  
 I view your lacerated Breast ;  
 This Waste of Ravages ! where stood  
 Your Sylvan Wealth ! your graceful Wood !  
 I cannot from the rifled Earth  
 Call into sudden, second Birth

The Forest, vanished from your sight,  
 Tho' once your Pride ! and my Delight !  
 But I can raise, in your Distress,  
 A Charm, that scarce will soothe you less ;  
 Behold this Proof of my Regard,  
 In Needwood's fascinating Bard !

He, whom our blended Gifts engage  
 To sing, with youthful Fire, in age,  
 He, Needwood ! by whose Breath you live,  
 Gives you, whatever Verse can give ;  
 He makes immortal, in his Songs,  
 Your Beauties all, and all your Wrongs :  
 His Verse displays a deathless Charm,  
 That foils the Force of Havoc's Arm ;  
 Age after Age, while Nymphs are found  
 To breathe Delight on English Ground,  
 The grateful Dryads will admire  
 The Magic of their Mundy's Lyre ;  
 And boast the Wood, he lov'd to praise,  
 For ever verdant in his Lays.

W. HAYLEY.

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